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SUBJECT: WHILE DARFUR PLANS ABOUND, FOCUS SHOULD BE HUMANITARIAN  
ACCESS AND PROTECTION

REF: KHARTOUM 1067

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: Within the last month, many politicians, opposition political parties, and civil society representatives have announced their proposals for ending the crisis in Darfur (see para 10 for a list of many of these initiatives). On August 19, three different groups and individuals (the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, a moderate NCP advisor, and the TDRA's Compensation Committee chairman) all pitched their own Darfur plans to polchief and poloff. With many different competing and vague plans, CHD's initiative, a pragmatic approach focusing on humanitarian access and security, appears the most promising. END SUMMARY.

CHD: START WITH HUMANITARIAN ACCESS  
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12. (SBU) On August 19, Dennis McNamara and Theo Murphy of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue told polchief and poloff that focusing on humanitarian access and protection should serve as a foundational step leading to more comprehensive negotiations. In their view, the peace process is fragmented, stalled, and leaderless, and the focus in the near term should be securing humanitarian protection and access in Darfur - "the proven worst region in the world for banditry and hijacking." McNamara and Murphy stated that it is in the interest of both the movements and the GoS to ensure humanitarian aid reaches the people of Darfur and that some rebel groups such as JEM and SLA/Unity have already agreed to "affirm their full support for the efforts of the humanitarian organizations to assist the people of Darfur." Building on the June workshop in Geneva that resulted in a commitment from SLA/U and JEM to coordinate on a mechanism to ensure a reduction in highjackings in their respective areas of control, McNamara and Murphy stated that they are now planning a meeting for only GoS officials in Geneva to discuss humanitarian access and security. The CHD representatives reported that they were supposed to present the idea to General Commissioner for the Humanitarian Affairs Commission, Hassabo Abdel Rahman on August 19, but that neither Hassabo nor leaders such as U/S Mutriff Sadiq were able to meet.

13. (SBU) According to these CHD representatives, although some of the rebel movements are currently supporting themselves through robbery and banditry, they could be enticed to help secure their areas of control. McNamara noted that "a deal could be worked out," where the movements are discretely and indirectly rewarded with increased food aid and non-military logistical support for reducing the number of incidents of high jacking and banditry in their areas of control. Polchief explained that there are restrictions to providing assistance to armed combatant groups, to which McNamara responded, "these things can always be worked out when done in the right way." (Comment: In addition to legal barriers, it should also be noted that the CHD approach assumes that: the rebels are able to develop stronger command and control structures over all of their field commanders and affiliated groups; the rebels have clearly

defined and static areas of control; the GoS is ready to recognize the existence of rebel controlled areas. All of these issues must be addressed if CHD's approach is successful. End Comment.)

14. (SBU) McNamara and Murphy agreed that this approach has provided the foundation for substantive negotiations in areas such as Congo and Sierra Leone. McNamara and Murphy added that such humanitarian access and security will encourage communication among the parties, as there is the constant need for information about the movement of convoys from region to region. Murphy also told poloff on August 20 that this approach can help build confidence among parties as monitoring the number of hijackings can provide quantitative feedback about the success of this approach. McNamara noted that CHD has discussed this idea with UNAMID's Joint Special Representative Rodolphe Adada, and while Adada expressed interest in the idea, he may need further convincing particularly about the implementation mechanisms for such a program. Although formally operating under the authority of the UN/AU's Joint Mediation Support Team, McNamara and Murphy stated that they have not directly discussed their plan with new chief mediator Djibril Bassole, as they want to allow him the time and space to formulate his own ideas "before we step in an unhelpful way."

#### NCP LEADER ON GoS DECISION MAKING & NEED FOR U.S. PLAN

15. (SBU) Also on August 19, a senior advisor of the National Congress Party told polchief and poloff that President Bashir's Darfur People's Initiative and the party's whole strategy to Darfur is "a mess." (Note: Contact's name and biography is available by siprnet communications. End Note.) The NCP official characterized the decision-making process in the NCP as "a big problem" and stated that "there have been a lot of missed opportunities in Darfur

KHARTOUM 00001276 002 OF 003

because of this flawed decision-making process." The NCP official claimed that NCP leaders have tried to control Darfur through Arabization, militarization, and the exploitation of ethnic identities. According to the NCP official, strategic decisions are not made at NCP headquarters or in government offices, but in select circles at people's homes. The NCP official said that Presidential Advisor Nafie Ali Nafie is at the head of this broken mechanism. Focusing on Nafie, the NCP official said that he has become such an authority in the regime that "as soon as he says something, it suddenly becomes a policy."

16. (SBU) The NCP official stated that because of this flawed system, it is difficult for senior NCP officials to listen to new ideas. However, the NCP official noted that during this critical period the regime will listen to anything the U.S. proposes. Even if the NCP rejects a U.S. plan for Darfur, said the NCP official, a U.S. initiative could start a new dialogue about possible solutions for the troubled region. "Some people in the NCP are very eager to hear from the U.S. The U.S. has a responsibility to try to do something and this will put pressure on the hardliners," stated the NCP official. However, on a much more pessimistic note, the NCP official said that he doubted the NCP will allow for progress in resolving the Darfur conflict "because they are afraid that Darfuris will unite against them." Therefore the regime is unwilling - "paralyzed" according to the NCP official - to take any specific course of action other than continuing to play various groups off one another.

#### DARFUR JUNCTURE FOR UNITY AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE

17. (SBU) Also on August 19, Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim, the Head of the TDRA's Compensation Committee, and Abdulhamid Ahmed Amin, a Darfuri businessmen working in Saudi Arabia, presented their plan for Darfur to polchief and poloff. According to Abulgasim, the plan entitled "The Darfur Juncture for Unity and Sustainable Peace," will focus first on "creating a conducive environment for uniting the people of Darfur..." Abulgasim stated that the forty-page plan was drafted months ago, but not released until it was presented to government leaders such as Nafie Ali Nafie, Muhammad Mandour Al-Mahdi, and Ahmed Haroun. Abdulgasim said that it is necessary to convince VP Taha ("leading the political wing of the NCP,") and Presidential Advisor Nafie Ali Nafie ("leading the security wing of

the NCP,") of the validity of this initiative. Abulgasim said that the GoS as a whole has been very receptive to the plan.

¶8. (SBU) Abulgasim added that this unaffiliated plan is particularly important, as Darfuris will reject proposals put forth only by political parties or by the government. (Note: On August 20, Abulgasim delivered an English translation of the declaration, objective, and signatories of the initiative to poloff. This document has been forwarded to AF/SPG and the office of the Special Envoy. Abulgasim promised to forward a full translation of the full 40 page Arabic document to poloff when completed. End Note.) Abulgasim stated that he has not had any contact with Chief Mediator Djibril Bassole.

¶9. (SBU) Comment: Although a comprehensive analysis of Abulgasim's plan will not be completed until a full translation of the document becomes available, locally engaged staff observed that the plan appears to treat the GoS with great sensitivity. LES staff speculated that the document may have been written with the GoS in mind as a primary audience. The plan also requests a budget of 25 million euros for this initiative, a significant sum, especially when compared to the measly 13 million received by the TDRA in its two and half years in existence. End Comment.

#### KNOWN DARFUR INITIATIVES

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¶10. As of August 20, the following Darfur initiatives have been announced:

- National Umma Party Initiative
- Democratic Unionist Party Initiative, Muhammad Othman Mirghani Initiative
- Democratic Unionists Party Initiative, Ali Mahmoud Hassanein (Translated version sent to AF/SPG and Office of SE.)
- SPLM Initiative
- Darfur Forum Initiative
- Darfur Civil Society Organization Initiatives (Heidelberg, Cambridge, DAJO, Dar Es Salaam)
- Popular Congress Party Darfur Program, otherwise known as the Darfur People's Initiative
- Umma Federal Party Darfur Initiative
- Rashaida Free Lion Initiative (Translated version sent to AF/SPG

KHARTOUM 00001276 003 OF 003

and Office of SE.)

- Darfur Civil Society Forum

#### COMMENT

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¶11. (SBU) The plethora of Darfur plans has created a chaotic environment in which almost every political group claims to have the answer to the Darfur crisis. While the potential ICC indictment against Bashir has brought a newfound energy to the peace process, it has not done so in a constructive, structured, and unified manner. Until the GoS brings something concrete to its much-touted Darfur People's Initiative or Djibril Bassole outlines his own plan for Darfur, CHD's vision appears to be the most reasonable plan. It starts with humanitarian access and security as a point of departure; with participation from UNAMID, this plan could be built into closer security coordination among UNAMID and rebel, militia, and SAF commanders in the field. Although CHD leaders have presented this idea to senior GoS officials, Adada, and the international community, it is surprising that CHD has not pushed this idea with one of the single most important players - Djibril Bassole - who is now in the UK studying English. During our August 19 and 20 meetings with CHD representatives, we encouraged CHD to reach out to the Chief Mediator, as they have extensive experience on the ground in Darfur, and can help inform Bassole during this crucial transitional period.

ASQUINO